

# Learning to Share Your Faith

*By Adrian Rogers*

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**Main Scripture Text: Acts 10:34–48**

*“And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree.”*

ACTS 10:39

## Outline

Introduction

- I. The Personal Confidence of the Soul Winner
  - A. They Spoke of the Virtuous Life of Jesus
  - B. They Spoke of the Vicarious Death of Jesus
  - C. They Spoke of the Victorious Resurrection of Jesus
- II. The Powerful Confirmation of the Scriptures
- III. The Persuasive Conviction of the Spirit
  - A. The Holy Spirit Witnesses to You
  - B. The Holy Spirit Witnesses in You
  - C. The Holy Spirit Witnesses Though You

Conclusion

## Introduction

Would you take God’s Word and turn, please, to the book of Acts chapter 10. We’re continuing our study, Living Supernaturally. When you’ve found Acts 10, look up here, and I want you to imagine a scenario, and you are right in the middle of it.

Imagine a man who is not a Christian, not a member of your race, much less your church or your denomination, but he is inquiring about faith. He wants to know more about the Lord Jesus Christ, so this is what he has done. He has gathered all of his family, his neighbors and his friends, he has them all over to his house, and then he invites you to come and to share your faith, and to tell why you believe in Jesus Christ. Would you be prepared to do that? If not, I hope you’ll be prepared at the close of this service, because that’s what happened to a man named Simon Peter.

There was a man named Cornelius. Cornelius was a Gentile, and he’s a Roman army officer, and God had spoken to him, and God said, Cornelius, go send for a man named Peter, and he’ll come to your house, and tell you how to be saved. And so, Peter, under direct orders, and by special invitation also, went to the house of this man Cornelius to share his faith.

Now, suppose that had been you. Would you have been ready? Would you have been prepared? What would you say? What will you say to an opportunity that you may have this afternoon or tomorrow? Now, my sermon this morning will be a colossal failure, either for me or for you, if you cannot come away from this message saying, I know what I would say, and I believe I know how I would say it. So that's what I want to do, is to prepare you for this opportunity that may come. Because, precious friend, you are to share your faith.

Do you believe in that? I hope you do. You ought to share your faith. As a matter of fact, if you have no desire to share your faith, I wonder if you're really saved. Now, we tell people to keep the faith. Not only should you keep it; you ought to give it away. And, if you have no desire to give it away, perhaps you ought to give it up. If you knew the cure to cancer, you'd want to share that, wouldn't you? The best news this world has ever known is the saving gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And I can give you this testimony: from the day that I gave my heart to Jesus Christ, to this very moment, there has always been a desire in my heart to share Christ. That's one of the ways I know it's real. I've not always shared Him, as I ought. I've not always been wise, I've not always been diligent, but there has been down in the recesses of my heart always a desire to share the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so, here's Cornelius, he has his friends and neighbors over, he has his children there, he has everybody there, and in walks Simon Peter to give his testimony. Now, he gives a threefold testimony, or a threefold confirmation of the gospel, and I want to lay those three things upon your heart today. But before we get to those, I want you to get the introduction. Look in verse 34: "Then Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." I love that.

Now, Peter is a Jew. He's come to a Gentile house. Up until this time, no Jew would enter into a Gentile house like this, to have fellowship with him, to share spiritual things with him. But God had to work on Simon Peter, and say, Simon, I love the world, I love all the people of the world—red, yellow, black, white, they're all precious in my sight. And whoever you are today, whatever your background, I want to tell you, God loves you. With God, there is no respect of persons.

And then, notice in verse 35: "But in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him. For the word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, he is Lord of all." Now, look up here, and let me tell you something. The door to salvation is very wide. There is no respect of persons. Whosoever will may come. And we're going to see, in verse 43, the Bible says that, if anyone will believe on Him, he'll receive remission of sins. So you say to yourself this morning, I can be saved, if I want to be saved. God did not say that some people can be saved, and other people cannot be saved, that some are in a select group; no,

there is no respect of persons with God—none whatsoever. The Lord is not willing that any should not perish. If you go to hell, a broken-hearted God will watch you drop into hell. It is not God's plan that you die and go to hell. "The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

But the second thing is, if you're going to be saved, you're going to be saved by Jesus or you're not going to be saved at all. That's what that verse says: He is Lord of all. Jesus is not a good way to go to heaven; Jesus is not the best way to go to heaven: Jesus is the only way to go to heaven—the only way, the only way—and, if Jesus is not the only way, He's none of the ways. He's not just one of the ways; He's either the only way or none of the ways. For what did He say in John 14, verse 6? "I am the way, the truth and the life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Now, that's either true or false, right? If it's true, He's the only way. If it's false, He's a liar, and He's not any of the ways. So, you can't just kind of tip your hat to Jesus; you have to bow your knee to Jesus.

And so, the door is very wide, but the way is very narrow. You come to the God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus alone has the answer, Cornelius, to life's pressing questions. Jesus alone can forgive your sin. Jesus alone can give you a hope that is steadfast and sure. Jesus alone can take the sting out of sin, the pain out of parting, the gloom out of the grave, the dread out of death. Jesus alone is the answer. I believe that with all of my heart. So the door this morning is very, very wide. Oh, but the way is very narrow. He, Jesus, is Lord of all.

Well, why should Cornelius believe that? Why? For Peter just to walk in and say, Look, Cornelius, Christ is Lord of all. He gave three lines of evidence to convict and convince Cornelius, and He wants to use those three lines of evidence through you to bring others to Christ, or else to bring you to Christ today. The Bible says a threefold cord is not easily broken.

Now, I want you to see the first of these things that Peter used when he came to this incredible opportunity. And, by the way, it is such an opportunity. Did you know, to win souls is not only a command of God, but a great privilege, a wonderful opportunity? An angel had visited Cornelius prior to this, and the angel said to Cornelius, Cornelius, you go and get that man Peter, and he will come and tell you how you and your house can be saved.

Now, wait a minute. There's an angel—there's an angel—talking to Peter, and telling Peter to go get Cornelius. Question: Why didn't the angel just tell Cornelius how to be saved? God never gave the Great Commission to angels; He gave it to human beings. We have a privilege that angels don't have—do you know that? No angel can be a soul winner. God never sent an angel to be a soul winner; God has sent you. You have a privilege that angels don't have. Now, thank God the angels can clear the way; thank

God the Holy Spirit can go before you.

When I played football, every so often, I'd get my hand on the football and head toward the goal. You know what I was always grateful for? Somebody doing some downfield blocking, somebody just clearing the way for me. But, friend, no matter how much downfield blocking there is, somebody has got to carry the ball. Now, God will do the downfield blocking for you, but you've got to carry the ball. And, if somebody's not carrying the ball, no matter how much blocking there is, you're not going to score, unless somebody carries the ball. And what I want you to do today is to do that, and not to fumble the ball. God will clear the way, but you have a privilege—you have a privilege—and an obligation, and a joy, that even angels don't have.

All right, what is this threefold cord?

## **I. The Personal Confidence of the Soul Winner**

First of all, there is what I want to call the personal confidence of the soul winner—the personal confidence of the soul winner. As you listen to Simon Peter here, as he shares his faith, he doesn't do it with any stutter, he doesn't do it with any stammer, he doesn't do it with any trepidation. He's not walking on eggshells and Jell-O; he has a rock-ribbed personal confidence. I want you to notice how this confidence is shown right here.

Look, if you will, in verse 39—Peter says, speaking of himself and the other apostles, “And we're witnesses of all things which he did...”—that's Jesus—“which he did, both in the land of the Jew and in Jerusalem, whom they slew and hanged on a tree. Him God raised up the third day and showed him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before a God even to us”—now, notice the confidence Peter has—“who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people and to testify that it was he which was ordained of God to be the judge of the living and the dead.”

Now, here he is. Peter says, Look. We are witnesses. When he said, we're witnesses of these things, he was talking about the apostles. Can you imagine what a jury the apostles would have made, had they been put in the jury box and asked to adjudicate whether Jesus Christ is the Son of God or not? Think of the apostles.

First of all, there was the apostle John—he was young, philosophical, and very observant. Secondly, there was Peter—he was a brash, loud-mouthed fisherman. Next, there was Simon Zelotes—he was a right-wing political zealot. Then, there were Nathaniel and Thomas—they were inclined to be doubters; we call him Doubting Thomas. And then, there was Matthew—Matthew was a tax-collector, kind of a hard-bitten businessman. Then, there was Andrew, who was shy and gentle and who got along well with little children. Then, there was Philip, who was kind of shrewd and

calculating. And then, there was James, who was very straightforward and had a no-nonsense disposition. They, these eleven men, would have made a wonderful jury, would not they? And here they are, all eleven of them. They're so very different, but there was one thing they were all unanimous about, and that's that Jesus is Lord. That's very interesting.

Look at our congregation. Did you know, if you start at this side, and go all the way across here, we're so different. You come from different backgrounds. You have different accents. You have different educations. You have different tastes. You have different political ideas. You like different kind of entertainment. You even like different kinds of worship services. We're not all exactly alike on any service. Some people would rather have more hymns. Others would rather have more choruses. Some think we ought to clap more; some think we ought to clap less; some think we ought not to clap at all. Some think the services ought to be longer; some think they ought to be shorter; some think that we ought to meet at a different time. Hey, folks, you couldn't be a pastor of a church like this without knowing all of that. We are very different, and some of us are strange. As a matter of fact, one out of every three persons here is kind of strange, so look on either side. If it's not them, it's you. We're different.

What holds us together? The same thing that held these eleven apostles together: His name is Jesus—His name is Jesus. You take Jesus out of Bellevue Baptist Church—there is no Bellevue Baptist Church, we would not come here and be the kind of people that we are, have the love that we have, and the joy that we have, the unanimity that we have, and the force and the power and the joy that we have, apart from Jesus—is not that true? These eleven men are bonded together, welded together, one in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And let me tell you what they were all three completely sold on. Are you ready? What did they all have the same confidence about?

#### **A. They Spoke of the Virtuous Life of Jesus**

First of all, the virtuous life of Jesus. Look, if you will, in verse 38. Peter begins to talk about how “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good.” They saw him. They saw His life. They saw that He was infinite goodness. And He did miracles. Look: “went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him.” They saw both His character and His works. They were eyewitnesses of these things. I can just hear Peter saying, Look. Yes, I know He changed water into wine. I drank some of it. I know He walked on water, because I got out of the boat and walked on water with him. I know He raised the dead. I saw with my own eyes. I know He healed lepers. I saw the transformation with my own eyes. I know He was transfigured. I was with him on the mountain. I was an eyewitness of His majesty; I heard the voice from heaven.

## **B. They Spoke of the Vicarious Death of Jesus**

So, they, first of all, were unanimous on the virtuous life of Jesus. But not only were they unanimous on the virtuous life of Jesus, they were also unanimous on the vicarious death of Jesus. Look in verse 39: “And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews and Jerusalem, whom they slew and hanged on a tree.” Peter said, I saw him dying in agony and blood. I saw when they took His lifeless body down from the cross. I saw him wrapped in linen grave clothes. I saw him placed in the tomb. We were eyewitnesses of His death. His death is an historical fact.

## **C. They Spoke of the Victorious Resurrection of Jesus**

And they were all convinced of the third thing: not only His virtuous life, and His vicarious death, but His victorious resurrection. Look in verse 40: “Him God raised up the third day and shewed him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before God, even to us who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.” Well, Peter, where do you get this confidence? Are you sure you’re not hallucinating? Peter, are you sure He wasn’t a ghost? A ghost? Man, we ate and drank with him. We touched him. Well, Peter, are you sure it was not a hallucination? Are you kidding me—a hallucination? He was seen of more than five hundred people at one time.

Well, Peter, how can we be sure that you haven’t just cooked up this whole story? How can we be sure that you’re not just telling a lie? A lie? Man, I would die for what I’m telling you. And later on, Peter did. Men may live for a lie, but no man will willingly, knowingly die for a lie. Friend, people tell lies to get out of trouble, not to get into trouble. These people, with no hope of personal gain, knew beyond a shadow of a doubt, just like the couple sang this morning, we have seen Jesus, I tell you He is alive, and they were convinced of His virtuous life. They were convinced of His vicarious death. They were convinced of His victorious resurrection.

And so, here is the soul winner. The soul winner has this confidence. Do you have that confidence? Do you have a confidence concerning the life, the death, the burial and the resurrection of Jesus Christ? If not, you’re not going to make a very good soul winner. You’re going to witness with stutter and stammer and apology, but oh, what a bold witness, when you say, I know that I know that these things are true. And, if you don’t, if you’re not solid on these things, I can tell you that you’re not going to be the kind of a witness that you ought to be. I’m so grateful that we serve a risen Savior.

Joyce and I were in Moscow, Russia some years ago, right after the Soviet Communist system disintegrated and fell apart. I was invited to go to the city of Moscow, to preach in Red Square on Easter morning on nationwide television. Can you imagine an opportunity like that? Easter morning there in Red Square, what Ronald Reagan had called the evil empire, and there on nationwide television, to share the Lord Jesus Christ. And we saw so many come to Christ on that wonderful Sunday Easter. It

was spitting snow there in Moscow. We were there in Red Square, where Lenin's tomb is. I said to Joyce, We're going to see Lenin's tomb on Easter, because the tomb of our Savior is empty; we're just going to go to Lenin's tomb. And we walked there into Lenin's tomb. And there are the words concerning Lenin. Listen to it: He was the greatest leader of all peoples, of all countries, of all times. He was the lord of a new humanity. He was the savior of the world. Did you catch that little word was? He was the greatest leader. He was the lord of the new humanity. He was the savior of the world. Now, let me put Jesus in the equation. He is the greatest leader of all people. He is the Lord of a new humanity. He is the Savior of the world, because He died, and He has risen again. Thank God for our dear Savior.

## **II. The Powerful Confirmation of the Scriptures**

Now, do you have that confidence? There is the personal confidence of the soul winner. If you don't have that confidence today, you need to get it, and you can have it. I'm going to tell you how in just a moment. But now secondly, remember I said a threefold cord is not easily broken. Here's the second thing. There's not only the personal confidence of the soul winner, but there is the powerful confirmation of the Scriptures. You see, it's not enough for you to say, Well, I know this, or I feel that, even if you're an eyewitness, because someone may say you misinterpreted what you saw, or maybe you made it up, or maybe it's autosuggestion. So God gives us something else. Not only does He give us this personal confidence, but He gives us a powerful confirmation, and that is through Holy Scripture.

Look in verse 43. Now, Peter's talking to Cornelius in his household. He's speaking of Jesus, and then he says this: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him should have remission of him." Now, listen to it: "To him give all the prophets witness." What was Peter talking about here? He's talking about the Old Testament, and he's saying all of the prophets in the Old Testament are unanimous about Jesus. Not some of the prophets, but to Jesus all of the prophets give witness.

Now, Peter says, Look, we're all unanimous; we're witnesses. But now, not only is there the witness of the soul winner; there's the witness of the Scriptures. The Scriptures give witness. Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament. Now, you're a thinking person. May I tell you that there are over 300 prophecies in the Old Testament that were directly fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ. And, by the way, I'm going to be speaking on those tonight, and you dare not miss the message: Christ in the Old Testament, the Jesus of the Old Testament. I don't even have time to touch on it hardly this morning. But there are some people who see these Scriptures fulfilled, and they say, Well, that's only because they've rigged it, that's only because Jesus and His

apostles rigged it; they arranged it for Him to fulfill these prophecies.

Well, you know what I agree with them. He did arrange it. Let me tell you what He arranged. Let me tell you what He managed. First of all, He managed to be born in Bethlehem. You think you could manage the place where you were going to be born? Micah chapter 5, verse 2: “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto me—yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me—that is to be the ruler of Israel.” Yes, He managed the place where He was going to be born.

I’ll tell you what else He managed. He managed to be born of a virgin. You think you could manage that? He managed that. You didn’t choose your mother; He chose His, and He chose to be virgin-born. Isaiah chapter 7, verse 14—Old Testament: “Therefore, the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Emmanuel.”

I’ll tell you something else that He managed: He managed to have His crucifixion described seven to eight hundred years before He was born, when death by crucifixion was not even known. The form of capital punishment that the Jews used was stoning. But Psalm 22 speaks of Jesus, and it says this: “They pierced my hands and my feet.” Seven hundred to eight hundred years before Jesus was even born. He managed to be crucified. Yes, He managed that. And He managed to have two thieves crucified with Him, one on either side, and subsequently to be buried in a tomb reserved for the rich. Isaiah 53, verse 6, “And he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death because he hath done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his mouth.”

I’ll tell you something else He managed: He managed that Judas would betray Him for thirty pieces of silver. Zechariah 11 and verse 12: “And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price, and if not, forbear. And they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. Now, yes, He managed that to happen.

And then, the classic arrangement that He managed, after three days He managed to walk out of that grave alive, the Savior of the world, and He was seen by more than 500 witnesses. Now, friend, most of these prophecies, if not all of them, were fulfilled, not by His friends, but by His enemies, those who had the most to gain by their not being fulfilled. Yes, thank God the Lord Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of Scripture.

Do you know enough Scripture to take the Bible and convince somebody about the Lord Jesus Christ?

### **III. The Persuasive Conviction of the Spirit**

There’s the personal confidence—Peter said we’re witnesses of these things. Secondly, there’s the powerful confirmation of the Scripture. Now, thirdly, there is the persuasive conviction of the Spirit. Look down in verse 44: “While Peter yet spake these words, the

Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.” Oh, I love that. Now, here it is: Peter’s giving his testimony; he’s saying, Look, I’ll tell you what I know. Here’s my confidence; here’s my rock-ribbed assurance. And then, he says, Look, it’s backed up by the Scriptures. “To him give all the prophets witness.” And now, while he’s doing this, the Spirit of God comes upon them.

How wonderful that is. And, O God, send your Spirit today; Lord, in all of your fullness and power, in this service, to convince and to convict. Many times I’ve told you anything I can talk you into somebody else can talk you out of. That’s the reason before I preach I cry out to God, and say, O God, anoint me, because I want the Holy Spirit of God to bring that final threefold strand. There’s the personal confidence of the soul winner, there’s the powerful confirmation of the Scriptures, and then, there’s the persuasive conviction of the Holy Spirit.

Do you know what Holy Spirit conviction is? When the Holy Spirit of God speaks to you, and the Holy Spirit says, That’s true. How do you know that Jesus is the Son of God? How do you know that the Scriptures are true? How do you know that those who say Jesus has transformed their lives, how do you know they’re really transformed? Because the Holy Spirit of God—the Holy Spirit of God—is the one who convicts you.

I’ve had people tell me, Hey, you would have made a good salesman. I don’t know whether I would have or not. But I don’t want to be a salesman, when it comes to the gospel. I’m not trying to just argue you into signing on the dotted line. I want the Holy Spirit of God to convict you of these things that I’m preaching. And the Holy Spirit of God will. He will. I’m not dependent upon eloquence. I’m not dependent upon logic. I am not dependent upon personal magnetism. All is vain, unless the Spirit of the Holy One comes down.

You know, in Acts chapter 5, the apostles were witnessing, and they said something wonderful. They said, “We are witnesses of these things, and so is also…”—now, listen to this—“so is also the Holy Ghost whom God hath given to them that obey him.” I love that. I fall back on that scripture so many times. We are witnesses. I am witnessing to you. I’m telling you my heart. I’m telling you all that I know, as best I know how. But I’m not dependent upon that alone; I’m dependent upon the Holy Spirit of God going up and down these aisles and through these pews, and saying, You’d better listen to him; he’s telling you the truth. This is of God—you’d better listen. See, I’m a witness, but so is also the Holy Ghost whom God hath given to them that obey Him.

Now, let me tell you how the Holy Spirit of God witnesses—and these are in 1 John chapter 5. But the Bible says, “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater.”

#### **A. The Holy Spirit Witnesses to You**

Now, we all receive the witness of men. If you eat, you put some faith in the cook, right?

How do you know your wife's not going to serve you a little strychnine and arsenic this afternoon? When you get in an automobile, somebody else is driving—you put your faith in the driver. How do you know this is not the day he's determined to drive off a bridge? You get on an airplane—you put your faith in the pilot. Most of you don't even know the name of the pilot when you get on the airline. You don't even look behind the door to see if you like his looks. You just get on.

Now, what's he saying? Listen. We could not live without putting our trust in other people for certain things. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. God speaks to you. That's the reason, when a person tells me, Hey, I can't believe, he's lying. There's nobody who says, I can't believe, who's telling the truth. Jesus did not say, You cannot come unto me; He said, You will not come unto me that you might have life. If you want to believe, you can believe, because God will enable you to believe. Your problem is not in your head; your problem is in your heart.

The Bible says, "Beware, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief." He doesn't say an empty head, but an evil heart. If you want to believe, you can believe. Why? Because the Holy Spirit of God will enable you to believe. He will witness to you. God is speaking to you today. Now, would you open your heart, and let God speak to you? You can stonewall God, but if you will receive the witness of men, if you put your trust in feeble man, with all of his failures and foibles, surely you can put your trust in Almighty God, in the Word of God. "We receive the witness of men; the witness of God is greater"—1 John 5:9.

### **B. The Holy Spirit Witnesses in You**

And then, not only does the Holy Spirit of God witness to you, but the Holy Spirit of God witnesses in you—and I love this. The Bible says in the next verse there, 1 John 5:10, "He that believeth on the Son hath the witness in himself." Now, the Holy Spirit of God spoke to me, and I believe in Jesus, and now the witness that was witnessing to me is witnessing in me. I have the witness in myself. The Holy Spirit of God lives in me right now, and enables me to believe. And did you know, because I have the witness in myself, I'm not at the mercy of some pagan, of some infidel with an argument. You could argue to me about hypocrites, or all kind of contradictions in the Bible, or anything else that you want to argue about, you're not going to stampede me, because I have the witness in myself.

### **C. The Holy Spirit Witnesses Though You**

Now, suppose I just had a big piece of apple pie, and somebody comes along and says there is no such thing as apple pie. Or somebody else says, well, if there is, it doesn't taste good, and doesn't satisfy. Well, that's not going to shake me—you know why? I have the witness in myself. You see, the Bible says, taste and see that the Lord is good.

So, He witnesses to me, then He witnesses in me, and, when He witnesses to me and witnesses in me, it's then that He witnesses through me. You see, this is what an effective witness is. An effective witness is somebody who has had an experience with God. Jesus didn't say, you're going to be my lawyers. A lawyer argues a case. A witness tells what he's seen and heard.

That's the reason Peter has such confidence. You see, Peter is there; he's saying, Look, we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. We ate with Him, we walked with Him, we talked with Him, we saw Him risen. I have absolute confidence. There's the personal confidence of the soul winner, and then there is the powerful confirmation of the Scriptures. We have the Holy Scriptures there in the fulfilled prophecies that say who the Lord Jesus is, and then, on top of that, there's the confirming persuasion of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit takes these first two things, and He comes, and He says to the household of Cornelius, these things are true—these things are true. Jesus said, “Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me.” God did not tell me that I have to go out and witness in my own strength. God gives me the Holy Spirit as an ally. Remember, we are witnesses to these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost whom God hath given to them that obey Him.

Now, if the Holy Spirit of God is not bringing conviction through your life, it may be that you're not living in obedience, because God does not give the Holy Spirit to rebels, but to them that obey Him. Now, here's an interesting thing. While we're at this particular passage, notice in verse 44: “While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word, and they of the circumcision”—that means the Jews which believed—“were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Now, how did they know that the Holy Ghost was poured out on the Gentiles? “For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we?”

Pastor Rogers, do you have to speak with tongues in order to be saved? Of course not! Are tongues a sign that you are saved? No. Why? What is tongues? It's the ability to speak in a language you've never learned, a supernatural utterance given of God as a sign. Now, the first evidence of this, the first happening of this, was on the day of Pentecost, in Acts chapter 2, and there were Jews there. But now, here's a new dimension to the gospel. Now, Peter's going to the Gentiles, to the household of Cornelius. This is the Gentile Pentecost. And the Jews were there; they were amazed, they said, Would you look at that—God has given the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles the same way He did to us. And what God was saying is, now there's one new body; it's called the church—Jew and Gentile are alike.

Now, that was a sign gift. We don't have to have that gift repeated. We're not trying

to repeat Pentecost any more than we're trying to repeat Bethlehem or Calvary. Bethlehem was God with us, Calvary God for us; Pentecost is God in us. It was a sign gift. We're not praying and asking God for another Pentecost. We're not praying and asking God for the Holy Ghost. He has sent the Holy Spirit. He has. I got a bike for Christmas when I was a little boy, a 24-inch Schwinn, candy apple red, with cream-colored stripes on it. I got it Christmas Day. Now, suppose I'd come to my parents about New Year's, and said, Mom and Dad, would you please give me a bike? I need a bike. Please give me a bike. They'd say, Son, we've given you a bike. Get on it, and ride it, okay? God has sent the Holy Spirit. We don't have to keep on asking God to do what He's already done. All this was a sign that now God has poured out His Spirit upon the Gentiles, and Jew and Gentile are now one body in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And then, you know what happened? You know what happened? Peter said to these people, Can any man forbid water that these should be baptized, because the Holy Spirit has come upon them as He came upon us? Now, look. They believed, and then they were baptized. Have you been baptized? Have you? Well, let me ask you: Have you believed? Now, if you've believed, then the next step is for you to make it public, and, on the first opportunity, to follow Jesus in believer's baptism. Now, if you've not believed, why not? You can, if you wish. There's the personal confidence of the soul winner, a man named Adrian. There's a powerful confirmation of the Scriptures; the Scriptures have proven conclusively that Jesus Christ is Lord. There is the persuasive conviction of the Holy Spirit—He's here today. And all you have to do is say, Yes, to the Lord Jesus Christ. "To him give all the prophets witness, that whosoever believes in him should have remission of sins"—verse 43.

I was getting on an airplane a while back, and the steward or the stewardess—I don't remember which—said something like this: This plane is bound for Cincinnati, Ohio. If Cincinnati, Ohio, is not in your plans for this afternoon, you need to de-board now. Well, friend, I want to tell you, without Jesus, you're going to hell. And, if hell is not in your plans, you need to de-board now. Give your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. And I want you to ask yourself this question, everyone: If I get to where I'm headed, where will I be when I get there? Everybody's headed somewhere. If I get to where I'm headed, where will I be when I get there? I'll tell you, on the authority of the Word of God, if you'll put your faith where God put your sins—on the Lord Jesus Christ—He will forgive every sin, He will come into you, cleanse you, and save you, and when you die, or when He comes again, He'll take you home to heaven.

## **Conclusion**

A threefold cord: most of us in this building today have given our hearts to Jesus, and we'll tell you, dear friend, that it's real—that it's real. Number two: we have the Word of

God that is so reliable. Number three: the Holy Spirit is here to say, Yes, that is true—that is true. Now, what would I like for you to do, and what does God want you to do? God wants you to give your heart to Christ, and to make it public. Now, we're going to sing an invitational hymn, and I'm going to ask the ministers of our church to stand all the way across here at the front, at the head of each of these aisles. Then I'm also going to ask a minister to stand under that banner over there to my right that says Redeemer, this one to my left that says Messiah, for those of you in the balcony. We're going to stand, and we're going to sing a song that says something like this: Lord, I believe; Lord, I receive; then, Lord, I confess you now. Don't let the devil intimidate you. The Bible says, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." I want you just to leave your seat and come forward.

You say, Pastor, what would I do when I go down there? What should I say? If you can mean it, just say this: I'm trusting Jesus—I'm trusting Jesus. What will happen? Well, we'll rejoice. Number two: we'll give you some Scripture to stand on. Number three: we'll seal it with you in prayer. We'll not embarrass you in any way. You'll see that you'll be treated with utmost respect. But we want you to have the joy of knowing Jesus, to know that you're heaven-born and heaven-bound.

Some of you have been saved; you've never been baptized. You don't have to be baptized to go to heaven, but if you haven't been baptized, why not? It's God's way to give Jesus glory, to give sweet affirmation and confirmation to you. Perhaps you need to come and say, Look, I know I'm saved, but I want to be baptized as a believer in Jesus Christ. Come down the aisle, and say, You know, I want to make an appointment for my baptism, and we'll make an appointment for your baptism, and you can be baptized as a believer in Christ.

There are others of you who are baptized believers, and your church membership is elsewhere. I don't know what's reason for it: maybe you just moved here, maybe for some reason you've been looking for another church home. For whatever reason, if you know Jesus, you believe as we believe, and need a church home, and everybody needs one—if not this one, one somewhere—I want to invite you to come forward, and say to the minister, I want to place my membership here. We'll tell you how you may become a member. If you've not been baptized, as we understand it, we want the joy and the privilege of baptizing you.

Some are coming, I trust, saying, I'm trusting Jesus. Others are coming, saying, I want to make an appointment for my baptism. Others are coming, saying, I want to place my membership here. Respectfully, I'm going to ask that no one leave during the invitation. If you're with a friend that needs to make a decision, you may volunteer to come forward with your friend. How beautiful that is. All of us are going to be in a spirit of prayer. As we stand and sing, don't look around and see what anyone else is going to

do; you just move on down the closest aisle, and say Yes to Jesus. Lord, I believe;  
Lord, I receive; Lord, I confess you now. Let's stand together.